

Outreach, Communications, and Partnerships

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Topic Area: Outreach, Communications, and Partnerships

Action Item

Issue a directive requiring consideration of environmental justice in all policies, guidances, and regulations.

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) developed a directive entitled “Integration of Environmental Justice Into OSWER Policy, Guidance, and Regulatory Development.” The directive requires the consideration of environmental justice in the development of all OSWER policies, guidances, and regulations, including meaningful input from stakeholders at critical points.

Completed Milestones

9/94 Issued directive to OSWER employees.

Contact

Timothy D. Mott, (202) 260-2447

Action Item

Expand environmental workforce curricula and develop pilots with community colleges, labor organizations, universities, and other worker training groups.

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

OSWER has been working with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) to develop health and safety training for communities with environmental justice concerns. The NIEHS Superfund Worker Training Program has provided safety and health training to over 400,000 workers in high risk occupations during the past seven years through extramural cooperative agreements with unions, universities, and community colleges. During the past three years, outreach and training have focused on low-income and non-English-speaking populations that are engaged in high-risk work activities. Specifically, safety and health curricula have been modified and translated to reach populations that do not have access to high quality safety and health training. EPA and NIEHS held a technical workshop in Cleveland, Ohio, in January 1995 to examine model programs for training young residents.

Completed Milestones

1/95 Conducted a technical workshop with NIEHS in Cleveland, Ohio.

2/95 Applications received.

Contact

Jim Maas, (202) 260-8927

[Note: This entry is also reported under the Federal Interagency Cooperation and the Contracts, Grants, and Labor topic areas.]

Office of Emergency and Remedial Response

The Office of Emergency and Remedial Response (OERR) is designing a pilot program to provide training to minorities and low-income residents in the hazardous waste cleanup field.

[Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) topic area.]

Action Item

Conduct presentations on environmental justice to establish and maintain communication with the public.

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

In a continuing effort to build and maintain an open dialogue with the public on environmental justice issues, OSWER senior management appeared at numerous speaking engagements and established lines of communications with a diverse group of stakeholders.

Completed Milestones

Conducted presentations on environmental justice to the following groups:

12/93	National Church of Christ Environmental Justice Summit
2/94	Environmental Justice Symposium on Health Effects
4/94	Environmental Justice Constituent Briefing
4/94	American Bar Association Forum on Environmental Justice
5/94	National Tribal Conference on Environmental Justice
6/94	National Association of Attorney Generals
8/94	Blacks in Government National Training Conference
8/94	American Bar Association Forum on Environmental Justice
8/94	Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials
10/94	Hazardous Waste Action Coalition
11/94	Northeast Waste Management Association
11/94	Air and Waste Management Association

- 1/95 Environmental Training for Inner City Youth Technical Workshop Advisory Council
- 1/95 National Religious Partnership for the Environment
- 2/95 National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council

Contact

Marsha Lindsey Minter, (202) 260-6626

Action Item

Coordinate with the first National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) Subcommittee on Waste and Facility Siting to implement the OSWER Environmental Justice Task Force's recommendations for environmental justice.

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

OSWER has worked closely with the NEJAC Subcommittee on Waste and Facility Siting to implement the OSWER Environmental Justice Task Force's recommendations and assigned a staff person (e.g., Designated Federal Official) to work with NEJAC on key issues. The Subcommittee provided extensive review and comment on the "OSWER Environmental Justice Task Force Draft Final Report." Many of these comments were incorporated into the revised OSWER environmental justice strategy document, the "OSWER Environmental Justice Action Agenda."

OSWER also continued to work with the Subcommittee to address public health issues and economic redevelopment/brownfields issues of affected communities. Additionally, OSWER and the Subcommittee continued to work together to develop recommendations concerning siting issues.

Completed Milestones

- 8/94 Coordinated agenda topics and participants for the NEJAC meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- 10/94 Coordinated agenda topics and participants for the Waste and Facility Siting Subcommittee meeting in Washington, D.C.
- 1/95 Attended NEJAC meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.
- 3/95 Developed responses to NEJAC comments.

Contact

Jan Young, (202) 260-1691

Action Item

Enter into partnerships to resolve issues that do not fall exclusively under OSWER jurisdiction.

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

OSWER entered into a cooperative agreement with the national office of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to examine the perceived health effects of inactive and uncontrolled waste sites on certain racially and economically disadvantaged communities. OSWER has been conducting interviews with affected community residents in an ongoing effort to obtain their perceptions of the health effects and risks to the community presented by these sites.

Information gathered as a result of this project will enable the 2,200 local branches of the NAACP to add environmental justice to their civil rights agenda, assist in efforts to empower local communities for meaningful participation in environmental decision-making, and allow for more effective dialogue between EPA and community residents on issues of mutual interest.

Completed Milestones

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1/94 | Entered into agreement with the NAACP. |
| 6/94 | Conducted interviews in Portsmouth, Virginia. |
| 8/94 | Presented workshops for NAACP National Board, State Conference Presidents. |
| 10/94 | Presented workshops for NAACP National Board, State Conference Presidents. |
| 11/94 | Conducted environmental training class for NAACP Regional Directors, State Conference Executive Directors, and other NAACP officials. |
| 2/95 | Conducted interviews in New Orleans, Louisiana. |

Contact

Marsha Lindsey Minter, (202) 260-6626

Action Item

Conduct Regional environmental justice public forums.

Region 4

Region 4 held a Regional Environmental Justice Forum in May 1994. The forum was open to the public and was well attended by outside interest groups. Information was exchanged on environmental justice initiatives and concerns.

Completed Milestones

- | | |
|------|--|
| 5/94 | Held a Regional environmental justice forum. |
|------|--|

Contact

Eddie Wright, (404) 347-3555

Region 6

Region 6 developed plans for a joint Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)-Superfund environmental justice public forum in a geographic area with high levels of environmental justice concern/issues as determined through input from various stakeholders. The public forum will take place in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in June 1995.

Completed Milestones

6/94 Selected public forum site.

Contacts

Verne McFarland, (214) 665-6617

Olivia Rodríguez Balandrán, (214) 665-6584

[Note: Regions 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10 are also in the process of planning environmental justice public forums.]

Action Item

Use Regional environmental education grants to promote environmental justice education.

Region 4

Region 4's Office of Environmental Education Grants funds grants for Regional environmental education. Local education agencies, State education agencies, colleges or universities, and not-for-profit organizations are eligible recipients. The Region awarded six environmental education grants during 1994 for environmental justice-related education projects.

Region 4's Office of Environmental Justice also funded an environmental justice project submitted by Clark-Atlanta University. This project provides a series of workshops and a professional development forum for faculty and students. The series promotes dialogue and exchange of information and ideas regarding strategies for integrating environmental concerns into curricula, community activities, and career preparation. Region 4 will use the curricula developed for this program to promote information exchange and to take advantage of outside training opportunities.

Completed Milestones

4/94 Awarded grants for environmental education.

9/94 Awarded grant to Clark-Atlanta University.

Contacts

Wesley Lambert, (404) 347-3555 (environmental education)

Vivian Malone Jones, (404) 347-4294 (Clark-Atlanta University)

Region 5

Environmental education grants were developed, in part, to educate communities on environmental issues affecting their communities. The Region's Office of Public Affairs promotes the environmental education grants program through Regional environmental justice contacts and community relations coordinators so that institutions with environmental justice-related activities will be aware of the opportunity to compete for these funds. Region 5 conducted an environmental grants writing workshop for Chicago public school faculty members. Part of the workshop was devoted to a presentation about the environmental education grants. Another portion presented the environmental justice grant program. More than 200 teachers attended.

Completed Milestones

12/94 Conducted the grants writing workshop.

Contacts

Suzanne Saric, (312) 353-3209

Gina Rosario, (312) 353-4716

Action Item

Develop program-specific and community/minority-specific environmental justice outreach strategies.

Office of Underground Storage Tanks

In order to maintain consistency across all Regional environmental justice plans, the Office of Underground Storage Tanks (OUST) issued a fact sheet on environmental justice to State OUST and Office of Leaking Underground Storage Tank managers. This fact sheet defines environmental justice, explains what EPA is doing to address the issue and how OUST programs can address environmental justice concerns.

Completed Milestones

9/94 Issued environmental justice fact sheet.

Contact

Sammy Ng, (703) 308-8882

[Note: This entry is also reported under the Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) topic area.]

Office of Solid Waste

A public participation rule for combustion-permitting procedures was proposed on June 2, 1994, that will expand public involvement opportunities during the RCRA permitting process. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the RCRA topic area.]

Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office

The Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office's (FFRRO) environmental justice support to other Federal agencies helps the agencies focus their public outreach efforts to more equitably serve their communities. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the Federal Facilities topic area.]

Office of Emergency and Remedial Response

The Office of Emergency and Remedial Response (OERR) and Regional community relations staff completed draft guidance on community advisory groups (CAGs) and identified 14 potential CAG sites in communities with environmental justice concerns. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the CERCLA topic area.]

Region 1

Region 1 established and has been interacting extensively with CAGs at two Superfund sites with environmental justice concerns. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the CERCLA topic area.]

Region 2

Region 2 chose the Diamond Alkali Superfund site, which has potential environmental justice concerns, to pilot the formation of a CAG. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the CERCLA topic area.]

In addition, to encourage earlier, more meaningful public involvement, especially in areas with environmental justice concerns, Region 2 developed a RCRA action plan and is applying the plan at a site located in Humacao, Puerto Rico. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the RCRA topic area.]

Region 3

Region 3 is modifying its RCRA public participation process to foster greater public involvement by modifying the RCRA Public Involvement Manual and the RCRA Community Relations Plan to address environmental justice issues. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the RCRA topic area.]

Region 4

The Region selected sites with environmental justice concerns at Chattanooga Creek, Tennessee, and the Escambia Treatment Plant, Pensacola, Florida, as CAG pilot sites. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the CERCLA topic area.]

Region 5

For fiscal year 1995, Region 5's Office of RCRA allocated additional resources to the Region's Office of Public Affairs to foster increased public participation in response to

environmental justice concerns raised during the permit process. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the RCRA topic area.]

Region 6

Region 6 has selected the Agriculture Street Landfill Superfund site in New Orleans, Louisiana, to pilot a CAG. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the CERCLA topic area.]

Region 7

Region 7 has selected the Oronogo-Dunweg Superfund site to pilot a CAG. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the CERCLA topic area.]

Region 8

Region 8 is working closely with two minority communities near the Rocky Mountain Arsenal (RMA), Montbello and Commerce City, to identify ways to more effectively involve the communities in site activities. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the Federal Facilities topic area.]

Region 9

Region 9 has selected the Del Amo/Montrose Superfund site to pilot a CAG. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the CERCLA topic area.]

In addition, Region 9 has enhanced its community involvement in the Verdesse Carter Park area in East Oakland, California, and is providing the community with an opportunity for meaningful and early input into the site assessment process. The Region has worked with local environmental groups to develop fact sheets which were mailed out and distributed door-to-door near the park, developed a local repository of information, and provided outreach to the community located near the park, which included holding a community meeting/open house. This meeting was held to inform the residents of the results of EPA's sampling, identify ways to minimize exposure, and provide a schedule of upcoming events.

Completed Milestones

- 3/95 Distributed fact sheets.
- 3/95 Held community meeting.

Contacts

Mike Bellot, (415) 744-2364

Dorothy Wilson, (415) 744-2179

Region 10

Region 10 has been involved in enhancing outreach to Tribes at the Department of Energy's Hanford site in Washington. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the Federal Facilities topic area.]

Action Item

Develop a public education and outreach program for communities likely to have OSWER-related environmental justice concerns.

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

OSWER's toll-free hotline, used to disseminate up-to-date information to the public on waste program issues, designated a staff person to keep up-to-date on environmental justice issues and provide this information to the rest of the hotline staff, track all Federal Register notices related to environmental justice, and maintain a reference file to respond to environmental justice questions. The hotline also began tracking all environmental justice/brownfields questions they handle, and implemented a translation service for Spanish-speaking callers. Formal training on environmental justice was also developed and presented to the hotline staff.

Completed Milestones

- 2/94 Designated environmental justice staff person.
- 8/94 Implemented translation service.
- 1/95 Began tracking environmental justice questions.
- 2/95 Conducted environmental justice training.

Contact

Carolyn Vanhook-Jasperse, (202) 260-7388

Region 2

Officials from the Region and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) met with "El Puente," a local community-based organization. El Puente founded a public school in 1994 for local Greenpoint/Williamsburg children, which emphasizes and encourages environmental and social activism in its students. During the meeting, the Region and NYCDEP provided educational materials and agreed to provide guest lecturers for special environmental activities at the El Puente school. The Region will conduct future outreach activities with the NYCDEP on a regular basis to provide environmental information to El Puente, as well as to other schools, citizen action groups, environmental groups, and the regulated community in Greenpoint/Williamsburg.

Completed Milestones

10/94 Met with El Puente.

Contact

Steve Petrucelli, (212) 637-3129

[Note: This entry is also reported under the RCRA topic area.]

On April 26, 1994, Region 2 met with the Interfaith Community Organization (ICO) of Jersey City, a church group representing approximately 35 local churches. At this meeting, the ICO expressed its dissatisfaction with the rate and quality of the State's efforts in chromium cleanup. The ICO also discussed a lawsuit it recently filed against the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) alleging that the State has failed to adequately protect human health and the environment. The ICO approached EPA Region 2 to help expedite the clean-up process. The resulting activities included a removal site evaluation, two on-site inspections by Water Management Division staff, and a review of existing pre-remedial file information. It was determined that the site was not eligible for a CERCLA removal action and was previously given a recommendation of "no further remedial action planned" by pre-remedial staff. As a result, the Region decided to monitor the NJDEP remedial activities. The NJDEP continues to be the lead regulatory agency responsible for the clean-up activities at chrome-contaminated sites.

Completed Milestones

4/94 Met with ICO to determine concerns.

5/94 Prepared an assessment of ICO needs.

Contact

Kathleen Gallagher, (212) 637-4137

Region 3

Region 3 is conducting the Urban Environmental Initiative in cooperation with the City of Baltimore and the Maryland Department of the Environment to identify areas of disproportionate risk in Baltimore City and initiate community activities. The initiative supports activities aimed at pollution prevention, risk reduction, public awareness, and other environmental activities in areas with environmental justice concerns within Baltimore City. The initiative is divided into two tracks: short-term and long-term. The short-term track uses the knowledge and experience of the interagency team to identify areas of immediate action. The team identified seven short-term areas: lead contamination, hazardous materials incidents, consumption of contaminated fish from Baltimore Harbor, air toxics, ground-level ozone, hazardous levels of radon, and indoor air pollution. The long-term track is designed to gather comprehensive data to identify environmental justice areas.

Region 3 has been active in projects in the short-term track. For the short-term lead project, the interagency team produced and distributed lead-dust cleaning kits to Baltimore residents in target areas. In October 1994, the team delivered approximately 150 kits to citizens who had received training in using the kits through the Baltimore

City Health Department. As of January 1995, the team has committed 1,400 of a total of 2,500 kits for distribution to trained community members. Additionally, the team submitted grant proposals for fish-consumption studies, the creation of an ozone map and associated public information activities, hazardous materials incident studies, and indoor air studies. These proposals are currently under review. The Region anticipates the proposal reviews will be completed in fiscal year 1995.

Completed Milestones

- 10/94 Held the Urban Environmental Initiative planning team meeting.
- 10/94 Completed short-term risk rankings.
- 10/94 Distributed lead-dust cleaning kits.

Contact

Reginald Harris, (215) 597-6529

Region 4

Region 4 is in the process of improving its communication plan. The plan will include public notification of the Region's intent, goals, and responsibilities regarding environmental justice. The Region received and reviewed proposals to implement the communication plan and will make necessary funding decisions to implement the plan in the coming year.

Completed Milestones

- 5/94 Received proposals.
- 6/94 Reviewed proposals.

Contact

Vivian Malone Jones, (404) 347-4294

Region 6

Region 6 established a workgroup to coordinate Regional environmental justice activities. The Region 6 environmental justice coordinator chairs the workgroup. This group is developing a training program for known environmental justice stakeholders who have OSWER-related concerns. In 1994, the Region conducted an outreach session entitled Partners in Protection in southern Louisiana to provide the public with information on how to become involved in environmental protection. Additional outreach activities are planned for fiscal year 1995.

Completed Milestones

- 4/94 Initiated workgroup planning.
- 11/94 Finalized workgroup outreach session.
- 12/94 Conducted outreach session: Partners in Protection.

Contact

Lynda Carroll, (214) 665-7200

Region 6 also will implement Technical Outreach Support Centers (TOSCs) at three to five non-NPL or non-time critical removal sites in fiscal year 1995. TOSC provides technical assistance for communities not eligible for Superfund Technical Assistance Grants. In addition, TOSC representatives are working with Pueblo Indians in New Mexico to provide technical assistance. The Region is concentrating on improving problem areas, such as the lack of coordination and communication between the Federal agencies assigned to various aspects of site cleanup. The Region selected the Pueblo Office of Environmental Protection (POEP) and the Devil's Swamp site to conduct TOSC outreach pilots.

Completed Milestones

9/94 Identified POEP and the Devil's Swamp site as two TOSC outreach pilots.
10/94 Initiated TOSC outreach with POEP.

Contact

Verne McFarland, (214) 665-6617

Action Item

Involve labor groups in environmental justice activities.

Region 6

Region 6 planned and piloted a contracts and labor seminar in December 1994 in the New Orleans area. [Note: More detail on this entry is reported under the Contracts, Grants, and Labor topic area.]